

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL
OF WEDNESFIELD
—
ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

ARTHUR HANDS L.R.C.P. M.R.C.S.

FOR THE YEAR 1895

WOLVERHAMPTON

PRINTED BY CULLWICK BROTHERS MARKET STREET

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Medical Officer's Annual Report.

1895.



BICKFORD HARBOUR,

HEATH TOWN.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

The year just passed has been characterized by a small number of cases of zymotic disease in the district, which may be in some measure due to the exceptionally fine weather experienced during the year, and also to the fact that there has been a less amount of poverty than in some former years.

POPULATION.—The population of the district estimated to the middle of the year was 4,987. On the 1st October the Local Government sanctioned a plan by which the north side of New Invention, which includes an area of about 215 acres, should be added to the Short Heath district, and in this portion there are 114 houses, and the estimated population is 570; so at the end of the year the population of Wednesfield would be less by this number, or 4,417 persons.

BIRTHS.—One hundred and four males and 67 females were born during the year, making a total of 171 in all, and, giving a birth rate of 34·5 per thousand; as nearly as possible there were twice as many births as deaths.

DEATHS.—Eighty-seven deaths were registered, and give a rate of 17·4 per thousand. Of this number 43 persons died in Wednesfield proper; 20 at Wood End; 16 at New Invention; and 8 at Marsh End. Twenty-three died under the age 1 year; 15 between the ages of 1 and 5 years; 6 between 5 and 15 years; 3 between 15 and 25; 14 between 25 and 65; and 26 at the age of 65 and upwards, four of the latter being over 80 years old, while one at Wood End attained the advanced age of 93. One death resulted from each of the following diseases respectively: Scarlatina; Diphtheria; Croup; Erysipelas and Measles; 4 from Diarrhoea; 4 from Phthisis; 14 from Pulmonary Affections; 6 from Heart Disease; 5 from Marasmus; and 49 from all other diseases. Eight inquests were held, and verdicts were returned that four of these died from “Suffocation by Drowning,” and four as the result of “Natural Causes.”

The deaths from preventable causes numbered 8, and were at the rate of 1·8 per thousand, this being the lowest zymotic rate for some years past.

ENTERIC FEVER.—There has been four such cases brought to my notice, all in the last quarter of the year. Two of them were in a small and stuffy cottage at the Scotlands, which was in an insanitary condition, and which had no drinking water at all belonging to it; all required, both for drinking and cleansing purposes, having to be carried from an adjoining well, and this

was probably contaminated, like most of the wells in the locality. In my report to the Council, furnished at the time these cases were mentioned, I suggested that the mains of the Wolverhampton Waterworks should be extended to the district, and although the Council felt themselves unable on a previous suggestion to go to the expense this would entail upon the property-owners in the locality, they are to be congratulated on again opening negotiations with this object in view, which it is to be hoped will be thoroughly successful, and so supply a very pressing want for the place. Another case was that of a relative of the foregoing people, living in Graisely Lane, and who probably contracted the disease in the same manner. The patient was removed to the Hospital for treatment, and also as a measure of precaution. As there is insufficient accommodation in the Isolate Hospital for the treatment of both Enteric and Scarlet Fever at the same time, perhaps the Council would take into consideration the advisability of providing "skilled nursing" at the homes of the patients suffering from the former complaint, as they are empowered to do.

SCARLET FEVER.—No case of Scarlatina has been removed to the Isolation Hospital up to the present time, as adequate means for their isolation have been provided at the homes of the patients. Seven cases were brought to my notice during the year, but there have been others which were not notified, for reasons given further on.

DIPHTHERIA.—One case occurred in the first quarter of the year, and two more in the last quarter—the latter being at Long Knowle Farm. I have examined the well-water here on several former occasions; I now find it still polluted, and quite unsafe to be used for potable purposes. The same remedy applies to this

as to the Enteric Fever cases—a supply of pure water, such as the Council is now contemplating.

INFLUENZA.—This disease was prevalent in the first quarter, and less so in the second, having apparently disappeared entirely during the third and fourth.

SEWERAGE.—Dr. Reid made an inspection of a portion of the district with regard to this matter in November, being accompanied by the Inspector of Nuisances and myself. The Council has since received an extract from his monthly report to the County Council, dealing with this, and have recently had an interview with the Sanitary Committee of the County Council on the subject.

VACCINATION.—As mentioned in my last Annual Report, public vaccination in this district seems to be gradually dying out, and ere long, if the present rate of decline still goes on, will become a thing of the past. Only 26 children were vaccinated at the public station during the latter half of the year. Parents take their children principally to medical men who make one puncture only, as they have great objection usually to have four punctures made, as is the case with most public vaccinators; and another thing which tends to reduce the number, is the probability that the compulsory clauses will be done away with after the report of the Special Commission which has the matter in hand, is presented to Parliament.

ADOPTIVE ACTS.—The following acts are at present a desideratum in Wednesfield, and much good would doubtless result from their adoption by the council: The Notifications Act, the Infectious Diseases (Prevention) Act, and the Public Health Amendment Act.

ISOLATION HOSPITAL.—Two cases of Scarlatina were admitted in the last quarter of the year, but both from the Heath Town district. Since the recent epidemic of Small pox the building has been well disinfected, and having been so long without patients, there will probably be no danger of any contagion being left from the latter disease.

COTTAGE HOMES.—There have been few cases of a serious nature among the children during the year. A case of Fracture of Thigh, and another of Marasmus (which unfortunately ended fatally) being among the chief. One case of mild Scarlatina occurred, at the end of the year, having probably been imported from the Workhouse, where the disease was very prevalent, and which was promptly isolated. Dr. Geo. Reid, the County Medical Officer, paid a visit to the Homes in November, and expressed himself as being very pleased with their healthy situation and surroundings. The children generally look bright and well cared for, the Committee of Management doing all in their power to promote their health and happiness.

NEW CASES OF SICKNESS.—It will be seen from Table B appended hereto, that 7 cases of Scarlatina, 10 of Diarrhœa, 4 of Enteric Fever, 1 of Erysipelas, 3 of Diphtheria, 3 of Phthisis, 12 of Influenza, and 23 of Febricula have been brought to my notice during the year, besides other diseases of a non-preventable nature, making a total in all of 155; doubtless there are many others also, but owing to there being no official notification in the district at present, they do not come to my knowledge, except in a few cases where one or two medical gentlemen kindly notify me, and so confer a gratuitous service on the community at large.

NEW BUILDINGS.—During the past year a new Board School has been built, adjoining the Neachell Road, in the Marsh End part of the parish. It accommodates 300 children, and is erected in a healthy situation. The sanitary and ventilation arrangements are all that can be desired, being of the most modern kind. There are extensive play-grounds. An improvement carried out is the laying of a gas main along the Neachell Road, which has enabled the Council to provide for the erection of lamps to light that thoroughfare. Three houses have been erected near the schools, and two others at Upper Wood End.

In conclusion, my thanks are due to the Council for giving all matters mentioned in my reports their serious consideration, although they may not have always seen their way clear to carry out all my suggestions.

I am, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

ARTHUR HANDS,

Medical Officer.

February 13th, 1896.

TABLE A.

Shewing the Deaths classified according to Diseases,
and Ages, &c.

At all ages.	Under One Year.	One and under Five.	Five and under Fifteen.	Fifteen and under Twentyfive	Twentyfive and under Sixtyfive.	Sixtyfive and upwards.
87	23	15	6	3	14	26

DEATHS.

	Under 5.	Over 5.
From Smallpox	0	0
„ Scarlatina	1	0
„ Diphtheria	1	0
„ Membranous Croup ..	1	0
„ Typhus Fever	0	0
„ Enteric or Typhoid Fever ..	0	0
„ Continued Fever	0	0
„ Relapsing Fever	0	0
„ Puerperal Fever	0	0
„ Cholera	0	0
„ Erysipelas	0	1
„ Measles	1	0
„ Whooping Cough	0	0
„ Diarrhoea and Dysentary ..	2	2
„ Rheumatic Fever	0	0
„ Phthisis	1	3
„ Bronchitis, Pneumonia & Pleurisy	4	10
„ Heart Diseases	0	6
„ Marasmus	3	2
„ Injuries	0	0
„ All other Diseases	23	26
Total	38	49

One death occurred in Cottage Homes from Marasmus, at the age
of ten years.

Deaths:—Equal to a Birth-rate of 34·5 per thousand.

Births: Males 104	} equal to a Birth-rate of 34·5 per thousand.
„ Females 67	
Total 171	

Population Census	1891	..
„ Midsummer	1894	4965
Area in Acres	..	2,539.

TABLE B.**New Cases of Sickness.**

Phthisis	..	..	3	Liver Affections	..	3
Syphilis	..	..	1	Rheumatism	..	3
Influenza	..	..	12	Heart Disease	..	1
Senile Decay	..	..	11	Marasmus	..	1
Quinsy	..	..	1	Febricula	..	23
Pulmonary Affections	..		27	Diarrhoea	..	10
Carbuncle	..	..	1	Scarlatina	..	7
Injuries	..	..	1	Enteric Fever	..	4
Paralysis	..		3	Erysipelas	..	1
Congestion of Brains	..		2	Diphtheria	..	3
Epilepsia	..	..	1	All other Diseases	..	29
Ancæmia	..	..	5	Total		155

The Notification of Infectious Diseases is not
Compulsory.

An Isolation Hospital is available for the District.

Area of District in acres, 2,536.

TABLE C.

List of Nuisances dealt with.

				Notices.
House dilapidated	..	..	..	1
House in a dirty condition		..	..	1
House not spouted	..	..	..	1
Fowls kept in the house	..	..	..	1
Pigeons kept in the house	..	..	..	2
Overcrowding in the dwelling house	..		..	8
Dirty washhouse and bakehouse		..	..	2
Drains stopped up	..	..	..	5
Offensive gutters	..	..	..	6
Offensive Privies require cleansing out			..	20
Privies out of repair	..	..	..	12
Privies to be lime-washed		..	..	4
Ashpits to be covered over		..	..	4
Workshops to be lime-washed		..	..	3
Fowls kept in the workshop		..	..	1
Slaughterhouse to be lime-washed	..		..	1
Pigs kept too near the houses	..		..	4
Stale Pig wash kept too near the houses			..	1
Defective drainage to pig sty	..		..	6
Manure kept too near the houses	..		..	5
Offensive and dilapidated urinal	..		..	1
Corpse kept too long unburied	..		.	1

Notices served and Nuisances abated between January,
1895 and 1896

February 13th, 1896.

J. TOMKYS.

